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## FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMCONGEN, PORT OF SPAIN

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

June 10, 1955

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SUBJECT: VEXING BRITISH GUIANA - SURINAM RIVER BOUNDARY ISSUE AGAIN RAISED

Another incident recently on the Corentyne River, the highwater mark on the left bank of which forms the boundary between British Guiana and Surinam, has occasioned in the Georgetown press a renewal of the proposal that the line of demarcation be shifted by diplomatic agreement to mid-stream.

According to the Georgetown Daily Argosy of June 2, the British Guiana tug "Parruru" had a week previous been forcibly seized by a Dutch launch, following a minor collision in which each side claimed the other was without lights, and towed to the police station at Nickerie. There, it was said, the tug and its crew were released only after the payment of a thousand guilders.

In an editorial the next day, the Argosy referred to the frequency of these irksome incidents and suggested that since the Corentyne River provides the only practicable channel of communication available to the interior of British Guiana's easternmost district, Guianese have no choice but to run the risk of being taken in tow by the "unbending" Surinam authorities. The only remedy, the Argosy suggested, is a revision of an outmoded river boundary to mid-stream so as to allow equal access to both countries. As a quid pro quo, the Argosy again proposed the cession to Surinam of the enclave between the New and the Oronoque Rivers in extreme southeastern British Guiana. The Argosy urged that the matter be pressed by Her Majesty's Government in negotiations with the Netherlands, and Surinam.

The question of the Corentyne boundary is undoubtedly a vexing one for British Guianese in view of their almost complete dependence on river transportation to the interior. Whatever the original justification of the boundary, it would seem only equitable that the river today should be shared between the peoples of the two countries.

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